

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

26TH CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT, NEW YORK

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HINCHEY INTRODUCES BILL TO PROVIDE TAX CREDIT FOR EMERGENCY VOLUNTEERS

WASHINGTON - U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (NY-26) this week introduced legislation that would provide a \$1,000 federal income tax credit to volunteer firefighters and emergency medical responders. All active members of volunteer firefighting and emergency medical service organizations would receive the tax credit.

"Throughout the district I represent, volunteers are almost always the first responders to fires and medical emergencies," said Hinchey. "These volunteers are indispensable to the communities they serve. I know they do it because they want to help, but the federal government should provide some additional incentive and appreciation."

Hinchey was approached last year by the Hudson Valley Regional EMS Council, whose member agencies were having great difficulty recruiting and retaining volunteers. The agencies in the six counties represented by the council experienced a 17 percent drop in membership from 1997 to 1999. To help alleviate this problem, Hinchey agreed to write a bill to mirror legislation that has been introduced in the New York State legislature to provide tax credits. He officially introduced the bill on February 12.

"September 11 reminded a lot of people of just how important emergency workers are," Hinchey added. "Although I started working on this bill well before September, it's my hope that the overwhelming support for firefighters and EMS workers that resulted from that tragedy will help to move this legislation along."